

SECTION 19. STATION FACILITIES INSPECTIONS (PTRS CODE 1635)

467. GENERAL. This section contains direction and guidance to be used by operations inspectors for performing station facilities inspections. Station facilities operations are defined as those support activities required to originate, turn around, or terminate a flight. Station facilities inspections are conducted on Part 121 domestic and flag operators, supplemental operators, and Part 135 commuter operators. Base inspections are conducted on Part 135 on-demand operators (see section 11 of this volume).

A. *Location.* A station facilities inspection is conducted at every location at which a Part 121 operator or Part 135 commuter operator initiates and recovers flights. A station facilities inspection encompasses both operations and facilities.

NOTE: This inspection is recorded under Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS) code 1635. Air operator facilities inspections and PTRS codes 1615, 1616, 1617, and 1618 do not apply to station facilities inspections.

B. *Inspection Areas.* Nine inspection areas have been identified as areas for inspectors to observe and evaluate during a station facilities inspection. These inspection areas are defined as follows:

(1) *Personnel.* This area refers to the personnel employed at the facility. Inspectors must evaluate the adequacy of staffing levels and the competency of assigned personnel in the performance of their duties.

(2) *Manuals.* This area refers to the availability, currency, and content of the written guidance required by employees in the performance of their assigned duties.

(3) *Records.* This area refers to those records that the operator is required to maintain relative to station activities. For example, operators are required to record hazardous material training for operations personnel. This area does not include those records inspected during a "records inspection."

(4) *Training.* This area refers to the adequacy of the

training given to assigned personnel as demonstrated by their knowledge of their duties. This area does not include crew and dispatcher training.

(5) *Facility/Equipment/Surface.* This area refers to the various physical elements required to support flight operations, such as ramp areas, blast fences, signs, signaling devices, lighting, passenger- and cargo-loading equipment, aircraft servicing, and towing equipment.

(6) *Conformance.* This area refers to the operator's employees' compliance with the operator's procedures and the FAR's.

(7) *Flight Control.* This area refers to the control and support of aircraft flight operations.

(8) *Servicing.* This area refers to the operator's procedures and standards required for the safe servicing and handling of its aircraft.

(9) *Management.* This area refers to the effectiveness of the operator's management and supervisory personnel.

469. MANAGEMENT OF STATION FACILITIES INSPECTIONS. Geographic program managers (GPM's) are responsible for planning and coordinating inspections of flag, domestic, supplemental, and commuter operator stations in their areas of responsibility. GPM's shall ensure that station facilities inspections are planned as "P" items in the annual work program for each station in the unit's area of responsibility. When an operator establishes a new station, the principal operations inspector (POI) and the GPM must coordinate the inspection plan before the inspection is conducted. The GPM is responsible for conducting the inspection; however, the POI may decide to include one or more inspectors on the team to ensure that appropriate guidance is available, and for standardization purposes.

NOTE: GPM's do not have to plan station facilities inspections of Part 121 operators or Part 135 commuter operators that contract to use facilities within the geographic area for a single flight or a short series of flights.

471. GENERAL INSPECTION PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. Inspectors who conduct station facilities inspections encounter a wide range of situations and operational conditions. Station facilities range from large physical plants (that have a permanently assigned station manager, numerous employees, and various departments) to a single counter manned by a single employee. A station facilities inspection may be conducted to provide an overall view of operations, or it may be focused on a specific area of interest. Inspectors should use the direction, guidance, and procedures that follow when conducting a station facilities inspection.

NOTE: The direction and guidance of this and the following paragraphs is general in nature. Not all of it may be appropriate in any given situation.

A. Planning for the Inspection. The inspector should carefully plan a station facilities inspection before conducting it. The inspector should review previous inspection reports, identify any areas of weakness previously reported, and review the corrective actions that were taken. GPM's should contact the appropriate POI to determine if there are any specific areas that may currently need inspection. The inspector should coordinate with the station manager ahead of time to establish a date and time for conducting the inspection.

B. Briefing for the Inspection. Before beginning the inspection, the inspector should request that the station manager provide a briefing on the facility operation, including its assigned personnel and operational procedures. In turn, the inspector should brief the station manager and the staff on the purpose and scope of the inspection. This discussion should include the following points:

- Purpose of the facility inspection
- Introduction of inspectors
- The specific areas to be inspected
- Inspection authority (FAR 121.81 or FAR 135.73)
- The proposed time and place of the exit briefing

C. Preliminary Tour. The actual inspection should begin with a tour of the facility. The tour should provide the

inspector with an overview of the operation and the location of individual sections. Inspectors should introduce themselves to section supervisors and other employees during the facility tour to become familiar with each section. The tour should include those areas of the facility that are utilized by the flight and cabin crews for dispatch, briefing, and flight planning, and those areas that are utilized for passenger loading, cargo loading, weight and balance preparation, and ramp areas.

473. SPECIFIC INSPECTION PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. Inspectors should use the Station Facilities Inspection Job Aid (figure 6.2.19.1. TBD) during the inspection. This job aid provides inspectors with "reminder" items to check when they evaluate specific areas. It also includes the applicable PTRS key word listing and codes to facilitate the writing of the inspection report. There may be areas inspected which are not included in the job aid. An area such as these should be recorded as an "other" item in the respective subject area. There also may be items on the job aid which are not observed and should, therefore, be left blank. The job aid is designed solely as a reminder and as a means of standardization to ensure that station facilities inspections are conducted in the same general manner. Inspectors should conduct station facilities inspections by using the procedures that follow.

A. Personnel. The inspector should review the staffing of the facility. During this review, the inspector should attempt to determine whether or not the station is adequately staffed and whether or not assigned personnel are competent in their duties. The inspector may accomplish this by observing individuals as they perform their assigned job tasks. For example, the inspector may review recently completed forms for accuracy and may interview personnel, while being careful to avoid interfering with their duties.

B. Manuals. The inspector should review the operator's manual or system of manuals for the operation of the facility to determine whether or not the manuals are on hand, current, readily available to personnel, and adequate in content. Direction and guidance for conducting a manuals inspection is contained in section 6 of this volume.

(1) *On-Hand Requirements.* Inspectors should determine what manuals the operator requires its station personnel to maintain and then determine whether or not these manuals are on hand. As a result of the inspection, the inspector should be able to conclude that either these

manuals are sufficient for the purposes of the station or that station personnel require additional information which was not available.

(2) *Currency Requirements.* The inspector should also ensure that the operator's manuals are current and that any required revisions are accurately posted. The inspector should obtain information on the revision status of manuals from the POI before beginning the inspection.

(3) *Content Requirements.* Each manual or publication should be checked by the inspector to ensure that it includes that information and guidance necessary to allow personnel to perform their duties and responsibilities effectively and safely. Inspectors should refer to paragraph 1163 of this volume for information on manuals relevant to station operations. Depending on the scope of operations conducted at the station, direction and guidance may be required in the following operational areas:

- Refueling procedures
- Aircraft towing or movement requirements/procedures
- Weight and balance manual/procedures
- Operation of ground service equipment/procedures
- Aircraft flight manual (AFM) for types of regularly scheduled aircraft
- Personnel training manual
- Current emergency telephone listing
- Accident/incident telephone listing
- Security training and procedures
- Severe weather notification procedures
- Carry-on baggage procedures
- Identification or handling of hazardous materials/procedures
- Instructions and procedures for notification

of the pilot-in-command (PIC) when there are hazardous materials aboard

- Procedures for passenger operation of electronic devices
- Contract service (if applicable)
- Trip records disposition

C. *Records.* Available records relative to station operations should be inspected, such as communications records and station personnel training records. (Inspection of crew and dispatcher training records and flight and rest records is a separate inspection activity.) Specific guidance for conducting duty-time inspections will be developed in a forthcoming section of this chapter; guidance for conducting trip records inspections is in section 20. In a small facility, a records inspection and a facility inspection could be conducted on the same day. In most facilities, however, records inspections and facilities inspections should be planned and conducted separately.

D. *Training.* The inspector should review the training conducted for the various classifications of station personnel. The regulations do not specify training requirements either by subject or frequency for station personnel, yet these personnel should receive both initial and recurrent training in assigned job functions. This training may be either formal classroom training or on-the-job training. Specific areas of training include the following:

- Duties and responsibilities
- Hazardous materials
- Passenger handling and protection
- Load planning and weight and balance procedures
- Communications procedures
- Manual backup procedures in case of computer or communications equipment failures
- Aircraft servicing and ramp operations
- First aid and emergency actions

E. *Facility/Equipment/Surface.* The operator's facilities must be adequate to provide safe operating conditions for both aircraft and personnel. The inspector should conduct an evaluation to ensure that the following conditions are met:

(1) *Ramp Maintenance.* Ramp areas should be clean and clear of foreign objects. The operator should have a regular program for inspecting, cleaning, and repainting ramp surfaces. Adequate equipment must be available for snow removal.

(2) *Passenger Safety.* Employees and passengers must be protected from jet or prop blast. If a jetway is unavailable or not used, inspectors should evaluate passenger-handling procedures and facilities and give particular attention to the movement of passengers across ramps. The operator must have established procedures for assisting handicapped passengers, especially when boarding ramps are not used.

(3) *Night Operations.* To ensure that adequate lighting is available and is being used for safe ground operations, inspectors should conduct observations during night operations, if feasible.

(4) *Station Manager Responsibilities.* The operator's management usually assigns station managers with the responsibility for maintaining surveillance of the airport and for reporting airport hazards and any new obstructions. Inspectors should determine what responsibilities have been assigned to the station manager and how those responsibilities are being discharged.

(5) *Airport Deficiencies.* Inspectors are not tasked with conducting a physical inspection of the airport during a station facilities inspection; however, any airport deficiencies observed during a station facilities inspection must be noted by inspectors and must be recorded for transmittal to the regional airports division.

F. *Conformance.* In each area to be inspected, inspectors should evaluate the operator's procedures for compliance with provisions of the applicable FAR's. In addition, the operator's employees must comply with the operator's directives as provided for in the operator's manuals.

G. *Flight Control.* The inspection of a station's flight control function should be conducted while actual arrival

or departure operations are in progress. This allows the inspector to get an overall view of the effectiveness of the operation and its assigned personnel. Background information on operational control is contained in volume 3, chapter 6. Direction and guidance for conducting operational control inspections is contained in section 18 of this chapter. Inspectors should familiarize themselves with these sections before conducting a station facilities inspection.

(1) *Operational Control Inspection.* When a dispatch or flight-following center is located within the station, an operational control inspection should be conducted in conjunction with the station facilities inspection. Unless the station is small, these two inspections should be planned and conducted as separate events.

(2) *Line Station Functions.* Operators often exercise operational control from a central location and assign the line stations with related support functions, such as delivering dispatch releases and flightplans to the flightcrew. In this situation, inspectors should determine which functions are the responsibility of the station. Inspectors should evaluate station personnel in the performance of these functions. Inspectors should also evaluate the effectiveness of the division of responsibility between the central operational control center and the line station.

(3) *Load Planning.* Inspectors should determine who is assigned responsibility for load planning and weight and balance control. Passenger and cargo weights must be accurate and reliably obtained, collected, and transmitted. Personnel must be adequately trained. Procedures should be simple and effective. When computerized systems are used, there must be adequate backup provisions for computer failure. When station personnel are required to perform manual calculations in case of computer failure, the operator must ensure continued proficiency of personnel in making these calculations. Inspectors should ask these individuals to perform a manual calculation and compare the individual's solution to the computer solution.

(4) *Weather Information.* Inspectors should determine the approved source of weather for the station. If weather information is provided by a supplementary aviation weather reporting station (SAWRS), the SAWRS co-operator should be evaluated. FAA Form 8430-22, "Supplementary Aviation Weather Reporting Station (SAWRS) Questionnaire" is the questionnaire used to evaluate the supplementary weather information to ensure that the

SAWRS observations are in compliance with the standards of the National Weather Service (NWS) (see volume 3, chapter 7 for additional information on sources of weather information).

H. *Servicing.* The servicing area of a station facilities inspection covers routine loading and servicing as opposed to aircraft maintenance activities. While operations inspectors should record and report observations they believe to be maintenance discrepancies, they are not assigned to inspect the maintenance activities. The preferred procedure is for station facilities inspections to be conducted by a joint operations/airworthiness team. Inspectors should evaluate areas of concern to operations personnel, such as the manner in which logbooks are handled and how MEL/CDL provisions are complied with. The inspector should observe and verify safe practices in the operator's service operations and that adequate personnel are available for the required aircraft servicing. Operations to be observed should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fueling (ensuring that proper procedures are being followed)
- Deicing (ensuring that the correct ratio and temperature of the glycol/water mix is being used and that all snow and ice is removed)
- Marshalling (ensuring safe operation and correct procedures) See Advisory Circular (AC) 00-34, "Aircraft Ground Handling and Servicing."
- Chocks/Mooring (ensuring chocks are in place, the parking ramp is relatively level, and brakes are set or released)

I. *Management.* Throughout the inspection, inspectors should observe managers and supervisors and evaluate the organizational structure, particularly the effectiveness of vertical and horizontal communications. Managers and

supervisors should be thoroughly aware of their duties and responsibilities and those of the personnel they supervise. Areas that inspectors must observe and evaluate include the following:

(1) *Outside Contractors.* If the operator contracts with other companies for station services, the station manager should have established adequate controls over their performance. The manager must assure that adequate training is provided to contractor personnel.

(2) *Contingency Plans.* The station management should be prepared for contingencies. Action plans should be available for use in case of such events as accidents, injury, illness, fuel spills, bomb threats, hijacking, severe weather, and hazardous material spills. Station personnel should know the location of these plans. Plans should contain emergency notification checklists and procedures for suspending or cancelling operations. Emergency telephone listings should be posted in obvious locations and be clearly legible.

475. STATION FACILITIES INSPECTION REPORT. Inspectors should use the Station Facilities Inspection Job Aid (figure 6.2.19.1. TBD) when recording the inspection in the PTRS and for updating the Vital Information Subsystem (VIS) environmental file. Station facilities inspections for Part 121 operators and Part 135 commuter operators are recorded under PTRS code 1635. Codes 1615, 1616, 1617, and 1618 are no longer used for these operators. Discrepancies observed during the inspection should be documented in the comment section along with any on-the-spot corrective action taken by the operator. Any recommended corrective actions should also be noted on the report so that the POI will have the inspector's views concerning the most effective means of resolving the discrepancies. When applicable, the inspector should indicate an outstanding or above-average station facility on the report to provide an accurate picture of the operator's operations at that particular facility.

476. - 486. RESERVED.

**FIGURE 6.2.19.1.
STATION FACILITIES INSPECTION JOB AID (TBD)**

[PAGES 6-423 THROUGH 6-434 RESERVED]